

FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION  
PROJECT PROPOSAL

AGENDA ITEM # 12  
DATE OF MEETING: July 15, 2004

ACTION: X  
DISCUSSION: X

**PROJECT TITLE:**

Technical Assistance for County Commission Preschool for All (PFA) Plans

**Summary of Request:**

Because the County Commissions participating in the PFA Planning Projects are all developing local PFA plans, there is a need to provide coordinated technical assistance in a timely manner. The American Institutes for Research (AIR) and First 5 San Mateo County Commission will coordinate technical assistance to First 5 County Commissions participating in PFA Planning Projects and their partners on how to phase in Preschool for All (PFA). The PFA Technical Assistance Project will receive up to \$250,000 for Phase I (July, 2004 – August, 2005).

**Background/History:**

The First 5 CCFC provided leadership and funding to initiate PFA Demonstration Projects in July 2003 (\$100M). To start the process, in March 2004 the First 5 CCFC approved PFA Planning Projects (\$50,000 each) for 12 County Commissions, upon their demonstration of commitment and capacity to meet ‘threshold criteria.’ Interest in developing local plans to phase in Preschool for All is also motivated by foundation support, proposed state legislation, and efforts to secure a stable funding source for Preschool for All.

**Description of Project:**

The goal of this technical assistance project is to assist the twelve County Commissions and local partnerships participating in First 5 PFA Planning Projects to develop local PFA implementation plans.

The proposed PFA Technical Assistance Project will build upon the *Preschool for All Toolkit* developed by AIR for First 5 CCFC. In addition, the project will develop a training packet containing additional templates, tools, and county-specific information for PFA planning grant counties; and provide concrete, detailed instructions on how to collect the additional data necessary to develop a complete cost estimate and PFA implementation plan. The technical assistance will be specifically designed to assist county commissions in developing plans that are aligned with the First 5 CCFC criteria (also aligned with AB 56), that accommodate local needs and promote local innovations, and that help each participating county commission to develop a work plan and a basic PFA implementation plan. The technical assistance will be practical and hands-on.

Technical assistance for the PFA Planning Projects will be provided from July, 2004, through August, 2005, to develop PFA plans that are ready for implementation by Fall, 2005. The technical assistance will be provided in three forms:

- 1) A full-day workshop open to the 12 PFA Planning Project County Commissions and the 3 Early Implementation PFA County Commissions to provide an overview of the PFA planning process and to meet with local commission staff to determine their PFA technical assistance needs;
- 2) Intensive technical assistance to the county commissions that have received First 5 PFA Planning Projects, including the development of a basic PFA implementation plan. This may be provided on a county-specific basis (or for several counties with similar needs) depending on County Commission preferences and cost-effectiveness.
- 3) First 5 San Mateo County Commission in conjunction with AIR, First 5 CCFC, and the First 5 Association will develop a list of qualified consultants to provide more in-depth assistance and/or workshops on specialized topics to be funded with First 5 CCFC funds (depending on available funding) or local funds.

### **Deliverables:**

#### **A: Full-Day PFA Workshop**

The first component of the technical assistance will consist of a full-day workshop. The workshop will provide an overview of the required elements of a PFA implementation plan and the methodology necessary for developing the plan. Meetings with individual county commission staff will be scheduled to determine their technical assistance needs related to PFA.

The workshop will provide an overview of the essential components of a PFA implementation plan:

- How to get started – the groups and individuals that need to be included in the design process, and how to promote a collaborative approach and joint planning with diverse stakeholders;
- Reviewing quality PFA standards as listed in the First 5 PFA ‘Expanded Criteria’ and assessing the gap between the standards of current programs and the desired PFA standards;
- Estimating the current supply and potential demand for preschool in a variety of settings;
- Estimating the need for upgraded and new spaces for children in preschool;
- Estimating the qualifications of the existing workforce to provide PFA, the current level of compensation, and the desired level of compensation comparable to that of elementary school teachers;
- Estimating the cost of upgrading existing programs to PFA standards, replacing parent fees, and creating new programs;
- Identifying the “hot zones” where preschool programs are most needed and planning on how to meet those needs; and
- Analyzing the options for financing, including the extent to which the locality has maximized use of existing funding and the possible sources for additional funds.

Following the overview of the essential elements of the plans and the meetings with staff from individual county commissions, AIR will produce a technical assistance work plan for each participating county commission.

### **B: Intensive Technical Assistance to Planning Project Counties on Developing a PFA Implementation Plan**

The next part of the PFA Technical Assistance will consist of providing intensive technical assistance to up to 12 participating county commissions to develop a PFA implementation plan. The product of this component of the technical assistance will be a PFA implementation plan developed by local commission staff with the aid of AIR's PFA Technical Assistance Project staff, and that is ready for approval by the county commission (and that will serve as the basis for determining readiness to participate in First 5 Demonstration Projects).

This component of the technical assistance will involve at least three one-day, on-site meetings with county commission staff and their community partners, supplemented by extensive e-mail and telephone contact. The basic approach will be as follows: AIR staff will provide templates and other tools from the *Preschool for All Step by Step Toolkit* that address the various required plan elements. The first step will be to complete the Program Quality Elements Worksheet to assess the status of the desired program standards. The next step will be to collect data on the existing supply of early childhood programs for the preschool population in the area. A central part of this phase will involve providing consultation on how to partner with the school districts with the most schools with API scores 1-5. It will also involve determining where the current supply of preschool programs is least available, and where there are at least some programs with the capacity to provide preschool services to new children. And it will involve determining where there is support from the schools, Head Start, and community leaders to do the extra work required to serve as kick-off sites for PFA implementation.

Based on the data collected by the local commission and its partners, as well as data already available through other sources, AIR will assist each participating county commission in producing a cost estimate and a PFA implementation plan. The final step will be to assist county commissions in analyzing the extent to which the county is already maximizing the use of existing funds available to finance preschool programs, and the possible additional sources to raise the remaining funds.

### **C: Technical Assistance on Special PFA Topics**

First 5 San Mateo County and AIR, in conjunction with First 5 California and the First 5 California Association, will develop a list of consultants to conduct these sessions on special topics related to Preschool for All, including but not limited to the following:

- ❖ Setting Targets and Planning for Inclusive Preschool Programs
- ❖ Examples of Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Programs

- ❖ How to Conduct a Survey on the Supply for Preschool, and How to Conduct a Parent Survey on the Demand for Preschool
- ❖ Estimating the Capacity of Local Post-Secondary Institutions to Educate the Preschool Workforce
- ❖ Creating a Preschool Facilities Plan for Your Community
- ❖ Developing Consensus for Quality Across Program Settings
- ❖ Assessing Preschool Programs
- ❖ Developing an Invitation to Negotiate to Administer Preschool for All
- ❖ Finance Options and Developing a Business Plan to Expand the Local Financing for Preschool
- ❖ Making the Case for Preschool for All

Depending on the extent of technical assistance and the configuration (e.g., if multi-county consultation is feasible) provided through Part B, remaining funds will be available for consultation and workshops on PFA topics for interested county commissions. Also, county commissions may choose to use local funds.

**Cost:**

The Technical Assistance for County Commission Preschool for All (PFA) Plans will receive a maximum of \$250,000 for one year, contingent on submission of approved work plans and budgets.

**Note:** After assessing the interest and needs of all county commissions on PFA, additional technical assistance may be provided through statewide strategies such as regional forums, workshops on special topics, and consultation. A second *PFA Toolkit* is planned to provide additional tools and resources on additional topics related to PFA development and implementation. Staff will return to the First 5 CCFC for approval to fund this second Phase.